

COAL MINES.

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The coal strata at the former place are calculated to extend over one-third of a square mile, with an average thickness of from 3 feet 6 inches to 4 feet; and the yield of the coal, if it could be worked, is estimated at 447,000 tons. At the latter spot the area of the coal-fields is computed to extend over 0.394 of a square mile, and the estimated yield of the mineral is about 1,100,000 tons. The coal at Cherrá Pánji and at Lá-ká-dong is in quality equal to some English coals; it is quick in its action, and consequently would generate steam rapidly; it cokes well, but gives out a large amount of smoke; it is fragile and easily broken. From the absence of that definite structure which produces the planes of division known to English miners as 'backs,' or joints in the coal, it breaks into unsymmetrical pieces, and consequently does not stow well. From its composition, quick combustion, and irregular cleavage, it is estimated to be from 5 to 7 per cent. inferior to good English coal; but as a gas-producing coal it is considered superior to English produce, both as regards quality and purity of the gas. It is also calculated to yield a good quality of coke. The market value of coal found in the Khási and Jaintía Hills cannot be given with any approach to accuracy, owing to the expense of labour in the Hills and of carriage to the plains. The Station of Shillong, which consumes coal as fuel, derives its supply from the coal beds at Miso-leh-lykhe, 18 miles distant, and the price is as high as £3 per ton. Lá-ká-dong is within six miles of Borghát, a village on an affluent of the Surma, which is accessible all the year round by boats of 300 maunds, or 18 tons burden; but at present only coolie-carriage is available between Lá-ká-dong and Borghát.

The following is a brief history of the mines at Cherrá Pánji in the Khási Hills, and at Lá-ká-dong in the Jaintía Hills:—Government holds a perpetual lease of the Cherrá Pánji mines from the chief or Siem of Cherrá, conditionally upon the payment by Government of a royalty of two shillings and eightpence for every five tons of coal quarried and removed from the mine, and also upon the terms that the people of Cherrá shall be permitted to work the beds on their own account. In 1844 Government transferred its right to work the mine to Captain Engledee, then agent of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, for a period of twenty years; but in the following year this gentleman, with the permission of Government, made over his lease to Messrs. Gilborne & Co., of Calcutta, who worked the mine for about two years,

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316 and in 1851 transferred their rights to Mr. W. Mason, of Calcutta.
 648 The last lessee, however, preferred buying his coal to mining it; and
 • 655 Government, seeing that the mines were not worked in a satisfactory
 manner, resumed the beds in 1855, and advertised them for letting.
 No person, however, has since come forward to work the mine.
 The Lákí-dong coal mines are the sole property of Government,
 which in the year 1848 leased the mining rights to Mr. B. W. Dudgey.
 This gentleman in the following year made over his lease to Messrs.
 Gibbons & Co., who soon afterwards transferred it to Mr. Mason.
 This gentleman surrendered his lease in 1855, when the mines were
 advertised for letting, but no one has since come forward and under-
 taken to work the coal. Between 1850 and 1854, while the mines
 were worked, about 5100 tons of coal were extracted for exportation.

[435] In Mr. Allen's Report, dated 1854, it is stated that the coal of the
 Hills then found a ready sale at Dacca and elsewhere at 8 *danás* per
maund; and that the average quantity exported into Bengal was about
 25,000 *maunds*, valued at Rs. 12,500, or £1250. According to the
 local trade reports, this exportation would appear to have entirely
 died out; but the Bengal registration returns record 2915 *maunds*
 of coal, valued at Rs. 1482, or £148, at the rate of 8 *danás* per
maund, as exported from Sylhet District in the year 1876-77. This
 supply was probably derived from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

317 **Limestone Quarries.**—A limestone formation permeates more or
 less along the whole southern face of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.
 The quarries are chiefly situated in the beds and on the banks of
 rivers and water-courses.

The limestone-quarrying localities in the Khasi Hills are the
 following twenty-six:—(1) Bha-wá; (2) Bar-gromai; (3) By-rang,
 also With-lung; (4) Buo-ping; (5) Chín-jed; (6) Dholai; (7)
 Dawid; (8) Isháimani; (9) Lám-dih-lung; (10) Langin; (11)
 Lang-lung; (12) Mán-mai; (13) Mán-dun; (14) Mán-ké-tú; (15)
 Mán-ké-tú; (16) Mán-lung; (17) Nák-tú; (18) Pítháid; (19)
 Rám-seng-mi-doh; (20) Sáb-lá; (21) Sáb; (22) Sháid; (23)
 Yangá; (24) Yang-wá; (25) Um-sung; (26) Um-sung. In the
 Jaintia Hills, the following seven:—(1) Chín-chant; (2) Lám-
 púthi; (3) Lítáing; (4) Mýth Píng; (5) Sanghí-lung; (6) Ráp-
 náth; (7) Rowá. The supply of limestone is literally inexhaust-
 ible. The wants of Calcutta and of the whole of Lower Bengal
 have been satisfied from these hills from time immemorial. During
 the year 1876-77 the estimated export was 1,500,000 *maunds*, valued

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Excises. In addition, there are a few small holdings at Jowli, in the Jaintia Hills, which have been settled, after measurement, under the Assam Settlement Rules for a term of ten years. In 1876-77 the total land revenue amounted to Rs. 203, or £12, 6s., derived from 24 *cuttas*. Other small items of revenue are derived from fisheries, licences, stamps, and excise. In 1876-77 the rent of the factory *machin* was Rs. 2321, or £132, 2s.; forests produced Rs. 772, or £37, 6s., of which Rs. 632 represents fees on the exportation of timber from the Khasi States to the District of Kámpir. In the same year stamps yielded Rs. 14,201, or £1424, 2s.; but this total includes the sale of postage and telegraph stamps, as well as the sum credited for service stamps. Excise produced Rs. 1214, or £121, 12s. The stamps are sold at the Treasury; there are no licensed vendors. The excise laws are applied only within the limits of the Stations of Shillong and Cherrí Píng, and throughout the Jaintia Hills. There are no licensed distilleries in the District, and the free manufacture of country spirit is permitted both in the dependent States and in British territory, what is manufactured is mainly for home consumption. In 1876-77 there were in all 18 licences in force—4 for imported spirituous and fermented liquors, 1 each for *malik* and *chanda*, 2 for *gáip*, and 10 for opium. The Khasis and Syntungs are not subjected to the use of intoxicating drugs, which is confined to the people from the plains residing on British territory.

Courts, &c.—In the year 1823 there were two Magisterial and Civil Courts in the District. By 1830 the number had risen to four, which continues to the present time. The maximum distance of any village from the nearest court is 6½ miles, the average distance is 2½ miles. In 1823 one European official was permanently stationed in the District; in 1830, two; in 1840 and 1842, again one. In the last mentioned year the subdivision of Jowli was opened in the Jaintia Hills; and there have since been two officers in the District, a Deputy-Commissioner at Shillong, and an Assistant at Jowli. The total number of magistrates is three. These figures, of course, are exclusive of the staff of the Local Government, which has been established at Shillong since 1876.

Police Stations.—For police purposes, the Khasi and Jaintia Hills are divided into the three following *tháks* or police circles, each with two *outposts*—(1) Shillong, with an outpost at Nongmah; (2) Jowli; (3) Cherrí Píng, with an outpost at Tháris gá, at the foot of the southern hills.

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